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25 FEB - 8

TO:^b S-6 A. KINNAN, UNATIONS, NEW YORK

FROM: TOUSIGNANT, UNAMIR, KIGALI

DATE: 7 FEBRUARY 1994

SUBJECT: UNAMIR Radio Station

I. In response to your request contained in your cable no. 403 of 6 February on the above subject, below are our comments and reactions to the letter from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda on the same subject:

a) At present we are not aware of any outstanding technical difficulties with regard to our broadcasting equipment. However, since we have not yet been able to test the five transmitters that have been installed throughout Rwanda (due to the non-allocation of authorized frequencies), we are unable to state with certainty whether our equipment is completely free of any technical defects.

b) The technical personnel responsible for setting up the radio were not incorrectly advised by UNAMIR on the type of equipment to be used in Rwanda. The fact that the equipment to be used by Radio UNAMIR is almost identical to that used by Radio Rwanda is irrelevant to the issue. Both were manufactured by major electronics companies in accordance with international specifications and their use would not create any problems for either radio station, so long as the proper frequencies are allocated.

c) Our original plan was to install five of the six transmitters within UNAMIR compounds and to have one transmitter site located on a mountain site which is already being used as a site for the location of telecommunications equipment by the Government and UNAMIR. When the Government official in charge of allocating frequencies expressed his misgivings regarding the choice of sites and alluded to the fact that UNAMIR may not be operating with complete transparency with regard to its radio broadcasting operations, the locations of the sites were modified to include use of three mountain sites for which governmental permission was needed. UNAMIR was denied permission for use of all of these sites ostensibly for the reason that our equipment would interfere with the telecommunications equipment already installed there. Both our military and civilian communications experts, as well as our technical consultant from GEC Marconi, dispute this claim. Instead, we were offered two other sites both of which would have entailed major logistical difficulties (and one of which was completely inaccessible by road).

d) UNAMIR is now compelled to locate all its transmitters within UNAMIR compounds for which government permission is not required. Our sixth transmitter has not yet been installed, because we will not know until we can begin testing our transmitters located at other sites whether this would be a viable transmitter site. We have been prevented from doing so due to the lack of frequencies. (It should be noted that this last site is considered

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crucial for reaching the refugee camps in Zaire and broadcasting in this refugee population will not be possible until the transmitter at this site becomes operational.)

e)- Regarding application for the broadcast license, a letter dated 22 September 1994 was sent by our Spokesman to the Minister of Information requesting a license for one transmitter site. Following a request for further details, the SRSG sent a letter to the same minister on 11 October 1994 providing a technical description of our equipment, as well as other details regarding our broadcasting operation. We were recently informed that this information was never forwarded to the Ministry for Transport and Communications which is responsible for allocating radio frequencies. Furthermore, we were informed by the Minister for Transport and Communications on 28 December 1994 that a formal application for the frequencies could not be made until we had obtained the necessary broadcasting license from the Minister of Information. An agreement between the Rwandan Government and UNAMIR for obtaining a radio broadcasting license was only signed on 14 January 1995.

f) On 8 November 1994 a Note Verbale was sent to the Ministry of Information informing them of our intention to commence periodic test broadcasting of our radio transmitter installed in Kigali pending the granting of a radio frequency from the Government. Subsequently, a letter was received from the Acting Director of the Rwanda Office of Information on 18 November 1994 requesting UNAMIR to discontinue its testing. UNAMIR complied with this request immediately and no further test broadcasting has been conducted since this date.

g) UNAMIR has never resisted giving any specifications on our transmitting equipment to the Government. We have observed all procedural and technical formalities in our efforts to comply with national rules and regulations. We have provided all the information requested from us and have even offered certain guarantees sought on the part of the Government. These include written assurances that we will not interfere with Radio Rwanda's broadcasting operations. In order to allay any possible doubt or suspicion, we have allowed Government representatives to inspect all our broadcasting and studio equipment in Kigali and have offered to do the same for all our other transmitter sites.

2. We hope the information provided above will serve to clarify the current status of the U.N. radio station, and we hope that the good-faith efforts undertaken by us in this regard will ultimately result in the allocation of all the frequencies needed for the successful operation of Radio UNAMIR without any further delay.

3. Best regards.

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